

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 072149
ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 /025 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: IO/UNA:BJSHARP

APPROVED BY: IO/UNA:AFHOLLOWAY

-----073057 211724Z /50

O 211641Z MAR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 072149

FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG

FOLLOWING REPEAT MASERU 689, ACTION SECSTATE INFO GABORONE
MBABANE PRETORIA CAPE TOWN DURBAN JOHANNESBURG 20 MARCH:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0689

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, SF, LT

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN FONMIN'S VISIT TO LESOTHO

REF: A. MASERU 0638, B. MASERU 0655,

1. AS REPORTED REFTEL B, SOUTH AFRICAN FONMIN, PIK BOTHA, VISITED
MASERU ON MARCH 16 AT HIS OWN REQUEST. THE MEETING LASTED HALF A
DAY.

2. EMBOFF UNEXPECTEDLY MET GOL FONMIN C.D. MOLAPO ON STREET IN
FRONT OF MINISTRY DURING AFTERNOON OF MARCH 16. MOLAPO INFMRMED
EMBOFF THAT HE HAD MET WITH BOTHA DURING THE MORNING TO DISCUSS
THE PROBLEMS OF FURTHER DETERIORATION OF LESOTHO-SOUTH AFRICAN
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RELATIONS AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS. IN
DESCRIBING THEIR TALK HE SAID QTE I RUBBED IT INTO HIM AND HE
RUBBED IT INTO ME UNQTE.

3. EMBOFF ASKED MOLAPO IF THE TRANSKEI BORDER PROBLEMS WERE
DISCUSSED BUT HE WAS EVASIVE AND SAID HE AND BOTHA BOTH KNEW
TRANSKEI WAS SAG'S BABY AND THERE WAS NO NEED TO DISCUSS IT.

MOLAPO WENT ON TO SAY THAT BOTHA COMPLAINED THAT MATANZIMA HAD BEEN ACTING UNFRIENDLY TOWARDS SAG LATELY.

4. AMERICAN DESK OFFICER OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR. T. CHIMOMBE, INFORMED EMBOFF THAT RECENT ARRESTS OF ALLEGED BOSS AGENTS (REFTEL A) WAS THE MAIN ITEM ON THE AGENDA. ACCORDING TO MRS. CHIMOMBE, BOTH ALEFT WITH THE TWO ARRESTED MEN.

5. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT ON THE BOSS AGENT ISSUE, SAG WON, WHICH MAY BE THE REASON FOR MOLAPO'S CRYPTIC DESCRIPTION OF THEIR MEETING. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL IF THE RELEASE OF THE TWO MEN REFLECTS THEIR INNOCENCE OR GUILT. A PRECEDENT OF INVOLVEMENT OF CABINET MINISTERS IN THIS KIND OF CASE WAS ESTABLISHED WHEN GOL FONMIN VISITED PRETORIA LAST YEAR TO DISCUSS ARRESTS OF LESOTHO CITIZENS IN SOUTH AFRICA. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS UNUSUAL THAT AT THIS TIME, WITH ALL OF SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS, BOTHA SHOULD VISIT MASERU ONLY TO DISCUSS THE ARREST OF TWO ALLEGED BOSS AGENTS. POST WILL REPORT FURTHER DETAILS IF THEY BECOME AVAILABLE. END COMMENT. STOKES UNQUOTE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE072149
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO/UNA:BJSHARP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780124-0704
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780341/aaaabixy.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0a2b61c0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MASERU 638, 78 MASERU 655
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3253130
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH AFRICAN FONMINI'S VISIT TO LESOTHO
TAGS: PEPR, SF, LT, (BOTH A)
To: LUSAKA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0a2b61c0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014